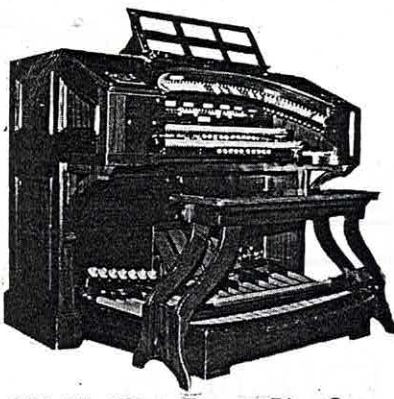
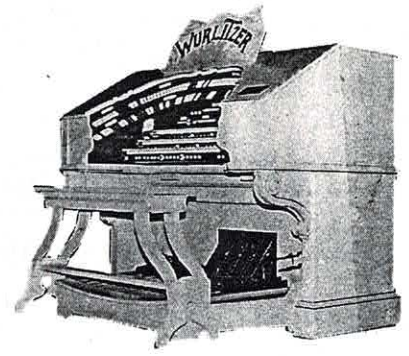


DECEMBER, 1994



2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

TOSA NEWS



3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

MERRY CHRISTMAS

to all our TOSA Members and Friends

CHRIS McPHEE

is BACK!!!

Australia's Top Young Theatre Organist



Sunday, 5th February, 1995

Orion Centre Campsie at 2pm

Volume 33

Issue 11

PRINTED BY TOSA

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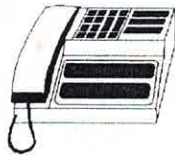
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TOSA NEWS

December, 1994

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

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COMING EVENTS

DECEMBER

Sunday 11 at 2.00pm **Tony Fenelon**
Christmas Concert
Orion Centre Campsie



HAPPY NEW YEAR !!
JANUARY, 1995

Monday 9 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

FEBRUARY

Sunday 5 at 2.00pm **Chris McPhee**
Concert
Orion Centre Campsie
Monday 6 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

Sunday 26 at 2.00pm **Tony Fenelon**
and
John Atwell
Concert
Orion Centre Campsie

MARCH

Monday 6 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**



REMEMBER TO TUNE IN TO
2CBA-FM 103.2

EVERY MONDAY AT 9.00 pm.

For "Theatre Organ Highlights"
Presented by Chris Styles

Editorial

Congratulations to the new members of the Executive and the Committee who have been elected for the coming year.

Being the last issue of the year, reminds me to thank all those members whose efforts have made this year's *TOSA News* editions possible, starting with the contributors who regularly, or even just occasionally, find or write something interesting to contribute, or who have taken photos, or had them screened for us, etc. Thank you to you all. I really appreciate your support and co-operation.

Also a big thank you to the hard-working people who prepare the membership lists, print, collate and send out each copy of the magazine to the hundreds of members. We are all very grateful to you for your constant, time-consuming efforts.

I have been asked by the committee to apologise to those members who were interested in have practice sessions on the **Orion WurliTzer**. The reason for the delay has been the dangerous and easily-damaged state of the cable connections at the back of the console. We have been making efforts to have this problem rectified but, because of pressure of work on the part of the technicians involved, the job has still not been done. This was in no way the fault of **Paul Luci** who volunteered to act as Practice Convenor and we apologise to him for the embarrassing situation in which he found himself, when the promised practice sessions did not eventuate. Hopefully the safety changes will be carried out soon and allow the practising to begin on Sunday mornings.

Since I will be away for 2 months during December and January, the next issue, which will come out at the end of January, 1995, will have slightly different contents - consisting mainly of 2 long articles which I haven't been able to find the space to print in the ordinary issues. One is about the new organ for **Melbourne's Regent Theatre** and the other is an interesting account of the latest tour around **Australasia** by **Nicholas Martin**. Some of our regular features will be held over until the following issue. If there is something important to be included in the January issue, you should contact our Membership Secretary, **Walter Pearce**, who has kindly offered to look after *TOSA News* in my absence.

We hope that you have all had an enjoyable *TOSA* year and I wish you a very happy time at Christmas and a wonderful 1995 to follow.

Best Wishes,
Colin Groves

Season's
Greetings

N.B.

For any enquiries (between now and the end of January) about the next issue of *TOSA News*, please contact our Membership Secretary, **Walter Pearce**, whose phone and address details appear in the page 2 Directory.



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

TOSA (NSW) is very pleased to welcome the following new members to our "ranks" and we hope that they enjoy being a part of our friendly society:

Geoffrey Marshall -
Hunters Hill
Jack Young - Lakemba
Ian Hansen - Petersham
Marie Edgar -
South Hurstville
Donald and Audrey
MacLaughlan - Glen Haven
Dorothy Reinhard - Waitara

*Articles in this journal
do not necessarily
represent the views of
the committee nor those
of the editor*

THEATRE ORGAN BROADCAST !!! COMMUNITY RADIO STATION 2MBS-FM

is planning to broadcast a one hour program of theatre organ music at 6.00pm on Monday, 12th December.

2MBS-FM transmits on
102.5 MHz

Registrations of interest

are being sought for the sale of the **Geoffrey Smith Residence Organ Christie 2/8** currently in storage in **Adelaide**

Registrations should be lodged before the 31st January, 1995

For further information, contact: **Milton Smith**
27 Stillwater Way
Edgewater
WA 6027

Telephone: (09) 405 1680

The President of the Shoalhaven Organ Society, G. London, writes to tell us about his group :

16/9/94

As President of the **Shoalhaven Organ Society**, it was with much pleasure that I received my first **TOSA** Newsletter, together with my membership card.

Our Society is also dedicated to the preservation of the theatre organ. Our membership totals 30.

It enlightens my heart to know that **TOSA** is doing so much to preserve the mighty, majestic **Wurlitzer** that has given so much pleasure to us in the past.

I was in the happy position of being a professional musician, and was reasonably known at many **Sydney** entertainment venues a few years back. I have many pleasant memories of playing organ and piano, and working with other great muso's in the club circuit.

Our Society boasts a couple of ex-professionals and all members own an organ, ranging from the smallest spinet to the larger console. I have in my possession a **Lowrey Promenade** console organ, which I have managed to keep in tip-top condition. This organ lends itself to the older theatre organ style melodies quite well and is good to play sacred music on.

Bert Myers lives a few kilometres from my home and is still using his talent by way of teaching young and old students.

In closing, many thanks for accepting me into your club membership, and my wife and I look forward to attending forthcoming organ recitals in **Sydney**.

Gratefully yours,
G. London, J.P.

It is always pleasant to welcome enthusiastic new members to our Society, and to hear of people from out of Sydney making the long journey to our concerts. Any of our members who would like to contact the Shoalhaven Organ Society, can do so by writing to:

The Secretary,

H.M. London,

5 Quickmatch Street,

Nowra East, 2541

or by phoning :

(044) 233571, for further information.

Editor



Colin Tringham of Chatswood raises a couple of points to do with the Charlie Balogh concert and the workshop evening :

21/9/94

I enjoyed the **Charlie Balogh** concert in August and can see that an evening at a Pizza Parlour with lots to eat and drink, accompanied by **Mr Balogh** would be a great night out. Sadly I guess I will have to wait until I go to the **USA** to experience this.

There was one aspect of this concert which rather disconcerted me, and that was the use of an electronic drum and rhythm system. The **Orion Wurlitzer** has an excellent Toy Counter and a competent organist should have been able to use this to give rhythm to the playing, without electronic adjuncts. I hope the Committee will be able to mention to future artists that these gimmick machines have no place at our concerts.

I read with interest **Ron Ivin's** review of the **Charlie Balogh** concert in the September **TOSA News**, and especially the comments regarding the workshop held on the following Wednesday evening. As a **TOSA** member/player, I need every bit of help I can get - especially with registration, etc.

However, the last workshop I attended was the one given by **Jim Riggs** where we were all presented with a beautifully printed folder. (There was no information in it - only headings) There was insufficient time to write much down before **Jim** went off to the next subject. In short, the workshop was a complete fiasco as far as I was concerned and definitely dampened my enthusiasm for future workshops.

Perhaps anyone giving a Workshop in the future could be encouraged to put a few words in **TOSA News**, indicating the scope of their presentation.

Yours faithfully,
Colin Tringham

A letter from Amy Caldwell of Mona Vale and Hollywell (Qld) who is lucky enough to be a member of both TOSA (NSW) and TOSA (Gold Coast):

25/9/94

While up here at the **Gold Coast**, I've been fortunate enough to attend 2 of our local **Gold Coast TOSA** club meetings.

The "**Show Biz Hits**" was a special concert, featuring the combined talents of our local members. Although the **Rodgers** decided to be temperamental, and we lost the Tibias, it was still an enjoyable and successful evening. Top marks to all those concerned with organising and performing.

TOSA meetings here usually take the form of musical items from members, ranging from those making their first attempts in front of other people to those who are more at home with the instrument and more experienced. Not just organ, but often vocal solos and duets, and piano items. So it's always a happy, friendly evening, finishing off with the time-honoured "cuppa".

In September I was fortunate enough to have a little play on our **Rodgers** and also that same evening we were entertained by "**The Two Jays**", from **Brisbane TOSA - Judy Vale and John Ellis** played organ and piano selections, and they were superb. I would not have missed them for anything.

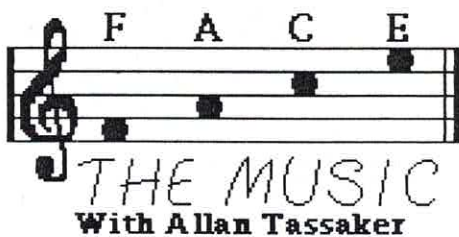
Visitors are always welcome, and we've had quite a number of visitors from around **Australia**. From **Sydney TOSA**, we had **Don and Joan Harding**, also **Doreen and Tony Tuck**. It's impossible to recall all the names.

Also, I thoroughly enjoyed reading **Ron Ivin's** report on the **Charlie Balogh** concert.

Regards,
Amy Caldwell

Thank you to the members who take the time to pass on their ideas and experiences. It is always interesting to hear about other clubs and their activities, and to know how members feel about the various events arranged by our own Society.

Editor



Allan Tassaker and a friend attended an organ recital the other night. As the recital proceeded, Allan's friend turned to him and said, "Wonderful playing, isn't it? I cry when I hear him play."

"I know," replied Allan. "It's the same with me, really. When I play, people cry too."

Adding as an afterthought, "But for a different reason!"

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- * It's a real knock out
- * Used by great men and women down through the ages - including Noah.

If you want to buy Allan's hammer, please let him know!!

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YOUNG ORGANISTS

The American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) offers scholarships every year to assist with tuition of young theatre organists. The applicants, who have to be studying with a music teacher or be enrolled in a university course, have to outline in an essay how they would use the award, which is worth US\$500, and is to be used for further musical tuition.

This year, 5 out of the 11 scholarships were awarded to young **Australians**. Our winners were **Sean Henderson** and **Heath Wooster** (formerly **Whale**) of **Melbourne**, **Lisa Cox** and **Dean Thomas** from **Ballarat**, and **Brian Heggie** from **Adelaide**.

Sean Henderson also received a further scholarship from the **San Diego Chapter** of ATOS, following a visit there earlier this year.

Congratulations to these talented young people.

FRESNO CONVENTION



The 1994 ATOS Convention in Fresno saw 2 young **Australians** performing under trying conditions in the **Young Organist Award Concert**. The concert was performed on an organ in an un-air-conditioned basketball stadium, with the temperature in the 40's. The blower had refused to work several times during the rehearsal period and the heat caused the tuning to be less than perfect. Despite the problems, our young ambassadors performed to great acclaim.

Chris McPhee of **Adelaide**, last year's Overall winner and main presenter of this year's concert, received glowing accolades after his performance.

Heath Wooster of **Melbourne** handled the trying conditions with the aplomb of a veteran and was well received by the audience.

The Senior winner, **Mark Aston** from the **UK**, gave a first class performance and was declared the Overall winner after the play-off.

T.O.S.A. (Vic) 23rd NATIONAL CONVENTION, MELBOURNE 1995
Friday 14th April - Tuesday 18th April
The Programme

FRIDAY	MALVERN TOWN HALL	MONDAY	DENDY CINEMA
12:30 P.M.	Delegates' Meeting, Registrations	9:00 A.M.	CONCERT 6 Ray Thornley & Chris McPhee
2:30 P.M.	CONCERT 1 Gordon McKenzie's "Stars on Stage"	12:30 P.M.	LUNCH (Not included in package, we suggest "Bertie's" Gardenvale)
5:30 P.M.	Buffet Dinner	3:00 P.M.	MALVERN TOWN HALL CONCERT 7 Gail Dibben & Carole Wyatt
8:00 P.M.	CONCERT 2 Tony Fenelon & John Atwell	6:00 P.M.	DINNER (available at hall, not included in package)
	* * * * *	8:00 P.M.	CONCERT 8 SILENT MOVIE EVENING David Johnston
SATURDAY	DENDY CINEMA		* * * CONVENTION CLOSES * * *
9:00 A.M.	CONCERT 3 David Johnston & Heath Wooster	TUESDAY	"AFTER GLOW"
Afternoon	Free time or Science Works Museum, Newport, or Maribymong River Cruise <i>(Indicate transport needs on booking form. Costs to be advised)</i>	All Day	WARRAGUL Morning Tea, Lunch, Concert
6:00 P.M.	MALVERN TOWN HALL Pre-Dinner Friendly Hour	10:00 A.M.	BILL GLASSON'S RESIDENCE WURLITZER (Caulfield, near Malvern)
7:00 P.M.	Convention Dinner, with Gordon Mc Kenzie's <i>"Melody Makers"</i>	2:00 P.M.	ALAN GLOVER'S RESIDENCE WURLITZER (Geelong)
	* * * * *		(Last two venues limited to 40 people)
SUNDAY	MALVERN & DENDY		* * * * *
9:00-11:00 A.M.	OPEN CONSOLE		
2:00 P.M.	MALVERN TOWN HALL CONCERT 4 Junior Artists		
5:00 P.M.	MOORABBIN TOWN HALL Spit Roast Dinner		
8:00 P.M.	CONCERT 5 JOHN SENG (U.S.A.)		

CONVENTION PACKAGE DEAL - All concerts from
Friday to Monday, Buffet Dinner Friday, Full
Convention Dinner & Drinks Saturday, Spit Roast
Sunday.

If paid before 31/1/1995 \$206.

If paid before 28/2/1995 \$220

WARRAGUL AFTER GLOW - includes transport, morning
tea, lunch, concert. \$25

BILL GLASSON'S RESIDENCE No Charge

ALAN GLOVER'S RESIDENCE - includes transport \$10

MARVELLOUS NEWS FROM MELBOURNE

Large Wurlitzer for Restored Regent Theatre

SCOOP!!!

Crowning Glory of Regent Theatre Melbourne Restoration will be..... a Massive Wurlitzer organ

WHEN THE Regent Theatre Melbourne reopens in 1996 after its \$25 million refurbishment, the portals of this massive movie palace will again reverberate to the sounds which give any great movie theatre its "soul", the sound of a mighty Theatre Organ. And what a theatre organ it will be—the Wurlitzer Style 185, Opus 416, first installed in 1921 in the Granada Theatre, San Francisco. Four manuals and 34 (approx) ranks of pipes!!!

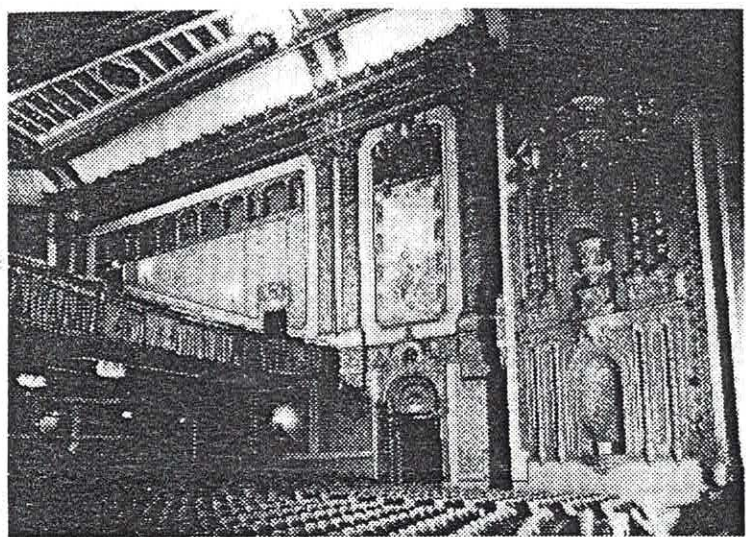
The combination of this instrument, about the seventh largest built by Wurlitzer, and the acoustics of the Regent have the potential of producing a sound never yet experienced in Australia, and a venue rivalling any of the remaining in-theatre Wurlitzer installations anywhere in the world.

The deal to land this Wurlitzer for Melbourne has been swung by a curious set of circumstances, the roots of which go back more than 25 years. At the time of the demolition of the Granada Theatre in the sixties, the organ was bought by Howard Vollum, executive of Telectronics and the Rodgers Organ Company, and removed to his Portland, Oregon home in a specially constructed music room. Following Vollum's death, the organ was bought by Mr Jasper Sanfilippo of Chicago, and placed in storage in Portland until such time as a location suitable for such an instrument could be found.

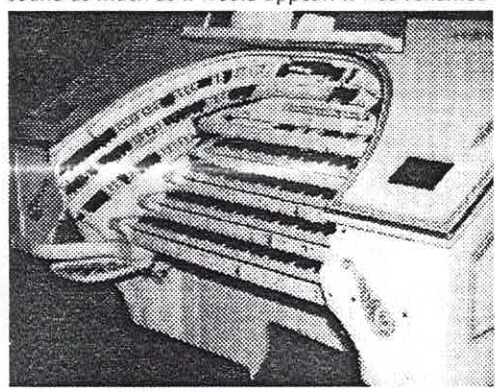
When Julien Arnold was requested by Staged Developments, Australia to look for an organ suitable for the Regent, one of the people he contacted in the US was organist Lyn Larsen, who is currently tonal advisor to Mr Sanfilippo for his circa 85 rank installation in his Chicago home. Lyn knew the Regent from his time in Melbourne many years ago and realised the potential of the refurbishment. He offered to put a proposal to Mr Sanfilippo to sell the organ to the Regent redevelopment. Until this time, the organ has never been for sale. On hearing of the project plans Jasper Sanfilippo agreed to the sale with Lyn Larsen acting as honorary intermediary. So Lyn came through for his adopted home town of many years ago. Melbournians, and all theatre organ enthusiasts Australia wide are in his debt, and that of Jasper Sanfilippo, and to Julien Arnold for his work at this end.

Julien is currently in Portland, Oregon transferring the massive amount of stored organ parts to three large containers for shipping to Australia. There are 32' Diaphones, 16' Bombardes (Tuba Mirabilis extensions), double percussions, a piano, a console and crates and crates of pipes.

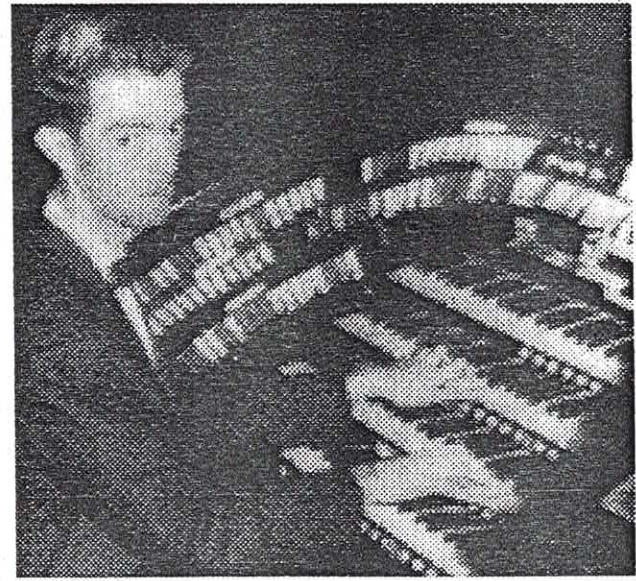
The project has had to remain secret until now because of Mr Sanfilippo's request for confidentiality until the organ was sold. VOX will bring you more details of this almost unbelievable addition to the theatre organ scene in Melbourne in the coming months. It is a privilege to have such a historic, original instrument coming to a location so worthy of it, the last remaining unaltered Regent of a once mighty chain, one not without controversy, however, over the past 25 years.



Above: Granada Theatre San Francisco, opened in 1921. Side grille work through which the organ spoke looks very dense, but did not impede the exit of sound as much as it would appear. It was renamed the Paramount in 1930.



Left: Granada console received the white and gold 'Rodgers' style treatment when installed in the music room of the late Howard Vollum, executive of the Rodgers Corporation in Portland Oregon. Extra classical pipework was added. This will not be coming to the Regent, but a rankage of around 34 is sure going to make heavenly music in the Regent Theatre Melbourne.



A young Tom Hazleton at the Granada San Francisco console in the 1960s, one of the last organists to play it.

This exciting news comes from the October issue of Victorian TOSA's VOX. Our next issue will have an extended article on this organ, its history and its despatch from the USA.



by Neil Palmer

TOSA has a limited quantity of

Walt Strony

recordings available:

ENCORES ! Volume 1

Walt Strony at the WurliTzer organs of the California Theatre, Chicago Theatre, and Mundelein. Tracks include: *Fascinating Rhythm, Londonderry Air, I Love to Hear You Singing, Broadway Rhythm, September Song, Waltz from Swan Lake*, plus more.

COMPACT DISC ONLY

THE MODERN THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

Walt Strony at the WurliTzer organs of the Gilson, Sanfilippo and Krughoff residences. Tracks include: *Selections from Phantom of the Opera, From This Moment On, Puttin' On The Ritz, Bess, You Is My Woman, Nola, Hooray For Hollywood, Selections from The Merry Widow*, plus more.

CASSETTE ONLY

BERKELEY !

Walt Strony at the Berkeley Community Theatre WurliTzer. Tracks include: *42nd Street Medley, It Happened in Monterey, A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square, The Burning of Rome, Where or When, This Nearly Was Mine, None Shall Sleep Tonight (from Turandot), Kismet Medley*, plus more.

CASSETTE ONLY

A MARVELLOUS MEDLEY OF THOSE GREAT OLD FAVOURITES

Reginald Dixon at the Tower Ballroom WurliTzer, Blackpool (transferred from 78's). Medleys include: *Beside The Seaside, The Sheik of Araby, I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles, Avalon, Till We Meet Again, Marie, Jealous, Let The Rest of the World Go By, Oo La La, Oh What a Pal Was Mary, Beautiful Ohio, How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm*, plus lots more.

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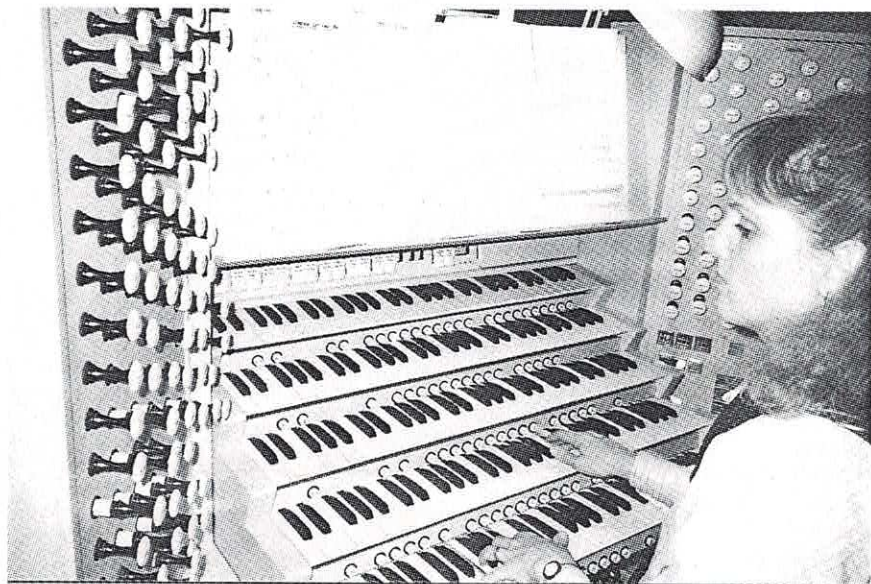
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Margaret Hall at the console of the Sydney Opera House organ, rehearsing for her recent performance with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, in their subscription series concert called *Silver Screen Orchestrations*.

.....and "Mary Poppins" descending the spiral staircase from the organ gallery to the choir gallery level in the Concert Hall after playing with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to an audience of over 2,000.

Margaret, as "Mary Poppins", also played an interval and post-concert solo recital of popular theatre music on this famous Sydney organ.

Margaret Hall at the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House



Photos by Robert Nelson

Reports from the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 15th November, 1994

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fellow members,

It is my pleasure and privilege to present my first annual report as President of TOSA NSW.

1994 has been an interesting, exciting, sometimes frustrating, but overall, a most rewarding year.

Activities have included eight very successful **Orion** concerts, where attendances have been most gratifying, with several concerts, including those of **Chris McPhee, Tony Fenelon and John Atwell, and Walter Strony**, each attracting over 500 people. In all, attendances have been enormously encouraging to your committee, reinforcing our commitment to the presentation of quality programs. Our concert attendances are the envy of other TOSA divisions.

In August, our society entered into a joint venture with the **Organ Society of Sydney** to sponsor a concert of popular organ classics presented by **Professor Thomas Murray** from **Yale University** at the **Sydney Town Hall Grand Organ**. While the overall attendance of around 450 was a little disappointing, the percentage of TOSA members present was quite pleasing at what was essentially a classical concert.

On the social side, members' playing afternoons were held at **Epping Baptist Church** in April and at **Mosman Baptist Church** in June when some excellent music was played by **Tom Barber, Colin Adamson, Chris Styles, Bill Schumacher, Wendy Hambly, Ron Ivin** and yours truly. We are indeed grateful to the diaconates and members of these churches in making their buildings, instruments and kitchen facilities available to TOSA in a most willing and agreeable manner.

Members' playing nights at **Campsie** are always popular, with several members travelling from as far away as **Nowra** to experience the thrill of playing our fine instrument. One of the frustrations of the year has been the difficulty in obtaining greater access to the **Orion** organ for more Members' Nights due to the popularity of this

venue among other hirers.

Members' playing sessions have also been deferred due to unavoidable delays in the provision of a more robust console cable. When finally installed, this will alleviate the possibility of unfortunate damage which has occasionally occurred while extracting the console from its lair, sometimes at most inconvenient times. Believe me, I speak from personal experience.

1994 has unfortunately also seen the passing of a number of TOSA members and personalities, including theatre organists, **Noreen Hennessy, Barrie Brettoner** and **Lance Wells**. Just last week, we also learned of the passing of a previous Vice President of this division, **Doug Smith**. **Doug** was a tireless TOSA worker and put in many hours during the restoration of the **Orion** organ. Our sincerest sympathies go out to the families and friends of all these good people.

Reports on the current status of our two **Wurlitzer** organs will be presented shortly. However, I would like to express the thanks of the whole society to those of our members who give their time and talents in achieving the high standard of maintenance that our organs enjoy.

In particular I would like to mention **Neil Palmer** and **John Parker** who supervise the **Marrickville** and **Orion** organs respectively. We particularly look forward to the results of **Neil's** efforts at **Marrickville** next year.

Our third organ, the **Christie**, is as yet without a home. Your committee is pursuing several possibilities, although it is early days yet regarding any definite proposals.

Our radio program "**Theatre Organ Highlights**" on **2CBA-FM**, continues well into its tenth, (or is it eleventh?), year in the capable hands of **Chris Styles**. We owe a debt of gratitude to **Chris**, to **Bill Schumacher** and the others who contribute to the production of this program.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Executive and Committee members for their support and tolerance in what are sometimes lively, long and late committee

meetings. I would particularly thank those who are not standing for re-election, **Ross Adams** (many thanks for the truck, **Ross**), secretary **Mary Stewart** (keeper of the mass of paperwork), treasurer **Jim Booker** (keeper of the finances in a most capable and astute manner) and Senior Vice President **Frank Ellis**, who is also stepping down as concert compere after who-can-possibly-estimate how many concerts in thirty-plus years.

A special word of thanks to our **TOSA News** editor, **Colin Groves** who puts in countless unseen hours in what is possibly the most thankless and onerous task in TOSA; to **Rob Gliddon** who prints **Colin's** efforts; and to **Mary** and **Arthur Hall**, who make sure that **TOSA News** reaches its ultimate destination, the members.

May I also thank the dedicated group of workers behind the scenes who sell tickets, tea, tapes and anything else we can find; who usher at concerts, who light and record the concerts, and who generally "get their hands dirty" to make TOSA what it is.

Finally, a big "thank you" to **you**, the members, for your support of the various society activities; for indeed, without you there is no society.

Thank you,
Cliff Bingham

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dear fellow members,

First of all, let me congratulate you on your wonderful patronage and support during the past year, which has resulted in our artists playing to capacity houses-for most of 1994! You have supported **Australian** talent as well as overseas expertise and this is very encouraging for the young organists who are serving their apprenticeships and hoping to try their luck in the **USA**. We have "unearthed" some really outstanding young performers, who are well on their way to becoming "stars of the future". They have really appreciated your interest and encouragement and so have the more mature **Australian** Theatre Organists, who have given us so much

pleasure over so many years. Just keep up the good work in 1995 (and thereafter) and **TOSA (NSW)** will go from strength to strength. Perhaps, one day, we may even have our very own Theatre and Clubrooms. Wouldn't that be terrific? Well let's make a start by subscribing to the **TOSA (NSW) TRUST FUND**.

I am very sorry to have to announce my retirement from the **TOSA (NSW)** committee and as Secretary due to increasing family obligations and important cultural and academic commitments but I have enjoyed my 5 years working with the **TOSA (NSW)** executive and committee and hope to help them (indirectly) in 1995. Merry Christmas to all.

Regards,
Mary Stewart

ORION ORGAN REPORT

1994 has seen the **Orion Wurlitzer** used almost continuously throughout the year for concerts, members' playing evenings, and on 2 occasions for the **Canterbury Council Mayoress' Luncheons**. Also... for the first time, the **Canterbury Theatre Guild** featured the organ as part of their recent programme, *Singin' In The Rain*. Much credit must go to **John Giacchi** for a remarkable presentation, in his accompaniments of numerous musical items during the show.

For some time now, we have been in the throes of re-leathering and installing additional Bellows and 3 Tremulants for installation in the **Orion** organ. This work was completed last week and

was carried out to improve the general tremulation of certain parts of the instrument, which till that time had not functioned with the best desired result.

Final setting up of the instrument is still being attended to and will be completed in time for **Tony Fenelon's** December programme. I am sure that you will all notice a pleasing difference to the organ's tonal output.

During the period this work was being done, certain other items were noted needing attention in the future and these will be detailed in a report to the committee.

Overall, the maintenance on the organ has been minimal, with regular concert tunings being all that has been required.

The replacement of the console cable, with a more robust equivalent is presently in hand, and should be attended to in the near future. This will prevent accidental damage, which has happened on odd occasions.

Thanks must be given to our life member **Russ Evans** from **Seattle**, who kindly presented us with the assorted Sleigh Bells required to complete the set in the **Orion** - 5 notes of which were missing when **TOSA** purchased the organ in 1972.

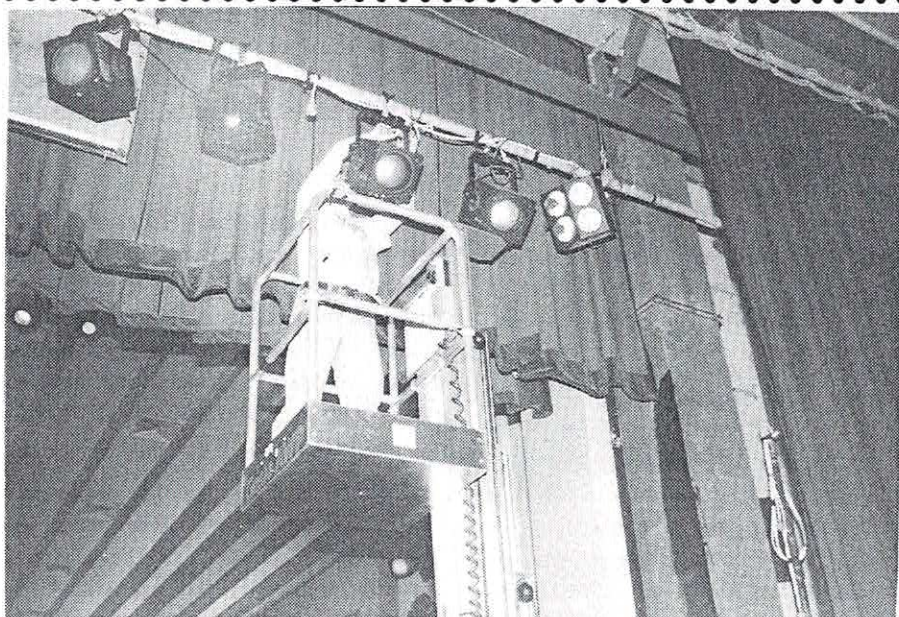
John Parker

John Parker fine tuning some of the Orion Wurlitzer's hundreds of pipes



Miles Perry above the Orion's stage, adjusting some of the many lights to provide the spectacular lighting effects he creates for every concert

Photography by Barry Tooker



MARRICKVILLE ORGAN REPORT

At the time of writing this report, all Solo Chamber percussions have been attached to the rear and angled walls to allow space for the addition of the twelve 16' Tibia pipes. The 16' octave of the Tuba has been relocated so that an extension ladder can be used to gain access to the percussions that are mounted high on the wall, such as the Marimba Harp. The 4 Tremulants in the Solo Chamber have been attached to the floor, and the wind lines have

been fitted. The Vox Humana Regulator has been fitted, which necessitated moving the Solo Regulator slightly so that the Vox Regulator would fit between the Solo and Tibia ones. The String ranks have been separated so that they can be provided with their own Tremulant and Regulator. Fortunately the Regulator that previously fed the Relays is now available for the Strings. Two Regulators and a Tremulant now unused at the **Orion** will be taken to **Marrickville**. The next items to be addressed will be the installation and winding of the Regulators for the Tuba,

the 16' Tuba Offset and all other 16' and 8' Offset chests in both chambers, as well as the String Tremulant. Once this is done, all the major re-winding will be complete and a start will be able to be made on the wiring.

In closing, I would like to thank **Ian Tullock** for assisting me on Saturdays. Thanks to **Robert Gliddon** for making the 3 wind boxes, **Chris Styles** and **Barry Tooker** for helping to hoist heavy items into position, and to the members of my family for their assistance.

Neil Palmer



Review of the WALT STRONY Concert

by Tom Barber

As the audience of over 500 waited, one could feel the air of anticipation for our October concert.

The lights dimmed, **Frank Ellis** appeared, for this his second last time as compere. After welcoming everyone to the **Orion Centre**, he proceeded to introduce our visiting artist, the **American Walt Strony**.

As the **WurliTzer** rose to the tune of *From This Moment On*, we knew we were in for an afternoon of superb Theatre Organ music. **Walt's** rendition began bright, then into a jazz feel, to finish in full theatre style.

Walt informed us that this year he is celebrating 20 years as a professional musician. His next number was *It Happened in Monterey*. This had a nice strict four-beat feel, with an interesting counter harmony with a full Tibia finish. Our **WurliTzer** piano, which **Walt** said was one of the best he has played with a theatre organ, featured in his next number. This was that old favourite *Nola*.

In a complete change of mood **Walt** played *Nessun Dorma* from *Turandot* showing us some of the beautiful tones that our **WurliTzer** possesses.

A delightful selection from *My Fair Lady* followed, it was during this selection that I realised why, like

myself, people came to hear the theatre organ.

Next we were transported to the **South Seas** with a beautiful and haunting interpretation of *Quiet Village*. Once again the **WurliTzer** piano was heard, this time in the accompaniment one could picture the swaying palms and the ocean lapping the shore.

Walt's classical skill was evident with a brilliantly played *Fanfare in D*.

From an the **Andrew Lloyd Webber** show called *Sunset Boulevard*, we heard a ballad called *With One Look*.

Leading up to interval **Walt** gave us some Opera. This one was *Samson and Delila* and from it he played *Bacchanal*, a very descriptive piece. At one stage I half expected a couple of camels to stroll across the stage.

Well refreshed and eager to hear more, **Walt** brought the console up with the toe tapping number *Puttin' on The Ritz* by **Cole Porter**.

Being a **Judy Garland** fan, I really enjoyed **Walt's** two numbers from her picture *Meet Me In St. Louis*. They being *The Boy Next Door* and *The Trolley Song*.

Happy Hampstead, from the show *Bank Holiday* was next. This piece

portrayed a Sunday afternoon in the park complete with carousel.

Walt's next piece was written by his only Theatre Organ teacher, **Al Melgard**, who for 45 years was organist at the giant six manual **Barton** organ in the **Chicago Stadium**. It was called *My Vision*.

A selection of **George Gershwin** followed with well known tunes including *I've Got Rhythm*, *Swanee* and *Someone To Watch Over Me*.

As **Walt's** concert drew to a close, he thanked everyone for coming and said he was looking forward to the rest of his **Australian** tour. For his last piece for the afternoon he chose the selection from *Kismet*.

The audience would not let **Walt** go without a final offering. As he does not play encores he asked the audience for some requests. These included *Sweet Georgia Brown*, *Memories*, *Phantom of the Opera* and a rousing *Stars and Stripes March*. Once again a great job by **Miles** on the lighting.

As he played *There's No Business Like Show Business* the console sank into the pit, with the audience applause lasting well after he had disappeared. I am sure all there had been fully satisfied with an afternoon of superb Theatre Organ at its best.

Orion Centre
Sunday, 9th
October, 1994



Photo by Barry
Tooker

Walt Strony writing down requests at the end of his concert

OUR NEXT ARTIST

Chris McPhee

5th February - ORION CENTRE

Chris McPhee began learning electronic organ in **Adelaide** at the age of 9, studying through the **Australian Guild of Music and Speech**.

His natural ability combined with hard work and enthusiasm gained him the Associate Diploma of Electronic Organ with Honours, as well as places in many competitions, talent quests and National Awards from AGMS. In 1990 he achieved full marks for his Matriculation Music (Performance and Theory) and in 1992 was the winner of the Royal School of Church Music's Scholarship.

He is a church organist as well as a rostered house organist for film shows at **Adelaide's Capri Theatre**, and a part time organist for a commercial undertaking. Last year he released his first commercial tape, *Introducing Chris McPhee*, recorded on a **Lowrey Heritage** electronic organ and his efforts were widely acclaimed.

Chris is in the enviable position of having the **Wurlitzer** in the **Capri Theatre, Goodwood, S.A.**, as his home-base instrument. The availability of such a fine instrument and the opportunity to play it regularly for film shows has done much to aid **Chris'** development. **Chris** also has the honour of being the Vice-Patron of the **Electronic Organ Club of South Australia**.

In 1992 he visited the **USA** on a

concert and study trip, where he spent a month under the tutelage of the brilliant musician, organist and teacher, **Jonas Nordwell**.

Probably his greatest achievement so far is the winning of the senior section of the **1993 Young Theatre Organist Competition** conducted by the **American Theatre Organ Society**, as well as being declared the Overall Winner of the whole competition, which includes entrants from **England, Canada, America and Australia**. His \$3,000 prize included a trip to the **USA** in July, 1993, to play at the **ATOS Convention** in **Chicago**, where he took part in a concert at the **3/17 Barton organ in Chicago's Patio Theatre** and was presented with his award. He was invited back last year to play at their **1994 Convention**, which was held in **Fresno, California**.

In the last 5 years of the **ATOS Young Organist Competition, Australian** entrants, sponsored by the **Australia Felix Chapter** of **ATOS**, have been awarded several scholarships and secured winning places on no less than 4 occasions - **John Giacchi** in 1990 (Senior), **Sean Henderson** in 1992 (Junior), **Chris** in 1993 (Senior), and **Heath Wooster** in 1994 (Intermediate). This is certainly a great achievement for our young organists and a compliment to their teachers, especially since there is so much

competition which appears to be getting stronger every year. **Chris** is the first **Australian** to be chosen as the Overall Winner, as well as winning his age-group

Chris has recently played in **Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Ballarat** and **Sydney**. Avid **TOSA** Conventioneers will have heard **Chris** at the **1989 Perth Convention**, when as a 15 year old he shared the stage with **Ballarat's Sean Dunwoodie**, and at the **1993 Adelaide Convention**, when this 19 year old's brilliant technique and sensitive interpretation were the exciting surprise of the whole Convention.

In September, 1993 **Chris** joined the ranks of duettists privileged to perform in tandem with the piano talents of **Tony Fenelon** at the **Capri, Adelaide**. They played to an ecstatic full house there and received a similar welcome at the **Orion** in December, 1993, when **Tony** introduced **Chris** to **Sydney** audiences for the first time.

These achievements and his stunning ability, combined with the warm, engaging personality which **Chris** unassumingly displays during his performances, provide the ingredients for a truly superb concert from this rising young star, whose concert last year was a rousing success.

Welcome back, **Chris**.

Booking Form : page 14



John Parker with the famous old Wurlitzer Picture: Sandra Priestley

Organ strikes new note

By WARWICK BRENNAN

WHEN Sydney's carefully restored Capitol Theatre reopened last month, missing was one item that had been a part of the venue since its earliest days.

The pipe organ, which had entertained everyone from silent movie fans in the 1920s to Bill Cosby fans in the early 1970s, was no longer a part of the majestic theatre.

But while the pipe organ had gone it was not forgotten.

Rescued from the Capitol as it fell into disrepair, the organ with its 1400 pipes has been carefully restored to its former glory and now entertains full houses at Camp-

sie's Orion Centre. President of NSW's Theatre Organ Society, Cliff

Bingham, said although built in 1927 the organ played just as well today as it did during the 1920s and was still very popular.

"We have recitals here once a month and they've been incredibly successful," he said.

"Last month we had more than 750 people - which is the most we've ever seen.

"Understandably most of the people are middle-aged or slightly older who remember the pipe organs but we are finding a lot of younger people starting to turn up as well."

After being installed in the theatre in 1928 the organ was one of the main attractions

at the theatre, entertaining guests as they arrived and left and providing sound effects for silent movies.

The arrival of television, however, saw the theatre's popularity die and the organ was no longer used.

Mr Bingham said when the Theatre Organ Society approached then Capitol Theatre owners Greater Union in the 1960s to adopt the organ, they were more than happy.

After buying the Wurlitzer organ from the theatre for \$5000 in 1972, the society carefully restored it to its former state over 15 years at the Campsie's Orion Theatre.

It is now estimated to be worth about \$300,000.